GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2688
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2014
MANUAL SCAVENGING
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Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the practice of manual scavenging is still prevalent in the country and if so, the names of the States along with the number of scavengers identified therein, State-wise;

(b) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure effective implementation of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013; and

(d) whether any review/study has been conducted by the Central Monitoring Committee regarding the implementation of the Act in the States and if so, the details and outcome thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI VIJAY SAMPLA)

(a) & (b): 'Houselisting and Housing Census, 2011' data released by the Registrar General of India in March, 2012, has, inter alia, provided number of households by type of latrine facility, including latrines from which night soil is manually removed. According to this data, such latrines existed in all States/UTs except in the States of Goa, Sikkim, and the UTs of Chandigarh and Lakshadweep.

Existence of manually serviced latrines in the States/UTs points to the fact that the practice of manual scavenging is yet to be eliminated there.

As per the latest information available on the basis of survey undertaken so far 11,635 manual scavengers have been identified in 11 States, State-wise details of which are given in the Statement.

(c) & (d) : The "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 has come into force w.e.f. 6.12.2013. The rules under the Act have been gazetted on 12.12.2013, which would also serve as model rules for the States.

Union Minister, Minister of State, Secretary and other senior officers of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment have held exclusive meetings in 15 States/ UT to sensitize the State Government machinery in this regard and review the status of action taken by them for implementation of the Act.

A Central Monitoring Committee (CMC) has been constituted on 13.1.2014, under the Chairmanship of Union Minister, Social Justice and Empowerment. Two meetings of the CMC have been held on 28.1.2014 and 21.8.2014 to review the progress of implementation of the Act. Major recommendations/ observations of the CMC, inter alia, include that the States/UTs should:-

(i) complete surveys of insanitary latrines and manual scavengers in a time bound manner.

(ii) make payment of onetime cash assistance to identified manual scavengers and make their comprehensive rehabilitation.

(iii) identify cases of sewer deaths since 1993 by the State Governments/UTs and payment of compensation to the affected families, as per Supreme Court's directive.

(iv) constitute the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees and hold their meetings at the earliest.